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ABSTRACT

Members of the faculty and administration at Western Washington University (WWU) were surveyed in 1978 in an effort to discover trends that could affect the university by the year 2000. The response rate was 32 percent for faculty and 49 percent for administrators. The first section of the survey concerns general trends: economic (inflation, technology use, energy, transportation, work trends, taxes); social (personal and family habits; race, sex, and age discrimination; communication); educational (research, career education, literacy, grading, curriculum content, nontraditional students, interdisciplinarity, competency-based education, personal development within education, government and education policy, academic quality, governance, and institutional finance); and specific academic disciplines. The second part refers to specific trends at WWU and in the Bellingham area: the usefulness of a WWU degree, governance, institutional identity and orientation, relationship with the university, and county characteristics. The survey results are briefly interpreted. The survey form is appended, with tabulations of the results. (MSE)

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FACULTY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FUTURE PLANNING: RESULTS

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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Office of Institutional Research

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

During the Fall Quarter of the 1978/9 academic year, the president and several campus groups indicated a desire to develop some realistic information concerning trends that could affect Western Washington University by the year 2000. It was decided to use a technique known as socio-political forecasting (for a complete description see Wilson or Burnett.[1]) This technique is of a general survey type known as "Delphi" surveys. The basic logic is that a knowlegable group will provide a reasonably accurate forecast of future events. For our survey we distributed the instrument to all members of the faculty and administration. The return rate was 32% (153 returned, 474 distributed) for the faculty and 49% (32 returned, 62 distributed) for administrators.

Questions for the survey were developed after a review of similar studies, particularly the College Board's Future Directions for a Learning Society Survey. We presented three general sections and special sections for both academic subject areas and the University. In all areas the respondent

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[1] Ian H. Wilson, "Socio-Political Forecasting: A New Dimension to Strategic Planning" in the Michigan Business Review, July 1974, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor or D. Jack Burnett, "Socio-Political Forecasting: Who Needs It?" in Planning for Higher Education, October 1978, Society for College and University Planning, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

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was asked to indicate both the degree of change for a trend and the impact this trend would have between now and the end of the century. In addition a short section requesting a minimum of biographical information was included. All responses were anonymous.

Section IA dealt with economic trends. Respondents felt that inflation would get worse and this would have a greater impact than any other trend in the survey. The trend showing the greatest amount of change was also in this section--use of computer and communications equipment to provide remote access to data. This was closely linked to an increased rate of change in technology. A series of questions dealing with ecology issues showed development of non-fossil energy sources was considered the trend with the strongest impact and change combination. Energy independence and pollution control were thought to have equally strong impacts, but the trends in these areas would not develop as quickly.

The respondents see both use of automobiles and taxpayer support for government spending declining. Two last trends in this section that are of note are gradual increase in the numbers of people moving into the state and the continued strength of the state's economy. The economic trends as a class had responses which indicated both the strongest change and impact scores. The largest standard deviation, 1.389, also occured in this section and was related to trend 7 having to do with the use of space colonies for manufacturing and energy transmission.

Social trends were all seen as affecting many people. Racial discrimination, the isolation of senior citizens and use of the printed page to communicate information were all seen as declining trends. The trend most sharply increasing was personal participation in athletics to maintain physical fitness. The strongest impacts were felt to be an unchanged U.S. birth

rate, declining racial discrimination, and a lessening of senior citizen isolation, in that order. Affirmative action efforts were rated as increasing slightly for both women and minorities. In general the social trend responses seem to reflect a moderately liberal viewpoint.

The section on educational trends might have been better labeled as "higher education trends". This was the first section in which the trends began to be very specifically job related for our faculty and administration. Most of the trends were scored as decreasing. The four decreasing trends were: public feelings about the value of a college education, tenure as a standard policy, grade inflation and the number of full-time students (ages 17-25). The strongly increasing trends included several indicators of a changing higher education environment. Competition for both students and funds, increasing numbers of older students, more mid-career job changes, and an emphasis on career education are all nationally recognized trends that were confirmed by the respondents. A question having to do with "student power" indicated that students are not felt to have any influence on educational programs.

The trend movements in this section were generally seen as having limited impact even in the case of growing trends. Competition for financial resources, mid-career job changes, and federal and judicial involvement in educational activities were rated as having the greatest potential impact on the University. In general the responses for this section seem to indicate that the faculty and administrators are well aware of national trends, but tend to minimize any local implications. This is not overly surprising since Washington State has often been perceived as being affected later and with less impact when an educational trend has been nationally reported. For instance our enrollment is now going up, while the national trend is toward lower enrollments.

The section covering trends in academic areas elicited the most conservative replies in the questionnaire. Respondents were asked to record their opinions for their own areas of specialization and therefore the number of replies ranged from 44 to 77 for specific trends. Most people rated their areas as having a limited impact on the University, only Business and Economics were perceived as growing. Every area rated itself as growing, slightly, in value as a career field. Departmental research and instructional techniques were perceived as improving, but in the aggregate this was not felt to have any effect on departmental standing within the University.

The final section in the survey was devoted to thirteen questions concerning Western Washington University and the City of Bellingham. Respondents were asked to indicate ideal, rather than probable, trend developments. During the next 20 years the faculty would like to see Western grow to 11,000 students (from the current enrollment of 9,800), become more involved in collective bargaining and become substantially more national in its identity. They would like the present friendly ambience of the campus to be preserved. They also feel the University should provide more service to the community. Both Bellingham and Whatcom County are predicted as having major increases in population, although written comments indicated that many were not pleased with this trend.

Appendix I is a list of faculty comments on and reactions to this survey. Appendix II lists the mean responses for all questions in the survey.

APPENDIX I

COMMENTS

Faculty Questionnaire

For Future Planning

- Mt. Vernon is one of the fastest growing communities in the state. This will affect our growth potential. Curricular development focused on use of leisure time could account for an enormous growth potential. Many factors point to ever increasing demand for change in curriculum.

- Slightly larger percentage of high school graduates will go to college. Tendency will be toward liberal arts education. More emphasis on recreation, leisure time, health, elderly.

- Western should strive to become a quality, small state university of 10-12,000. The Sehome location can't take anymore than that. We need more research and publication of public service nature and higher grade point requirements for entry.

- My responses to Section 1.D (Trends in Academic Areas) are based on administrative attitudes toward my Department (English), which will do much to keep the Department from growing during the next several years.

- The state will impose a target of 10,000 student population for WWU. This restriction is already in effect.

- Western should attempt to retain its present character in the face of rising population pressures.

- Long range planning should not be attempted. It results, at best, in self-fulfilling prophecies, or, at worst, in stultification and/or "dinosaurism". All institutional changes should be minimal and slow, and should look backward, not forward.

- I project an increase in amount of reading but for reasons other than information acquisition (Question #10, Section 1.B.)

- Sees increase in graduate student population from 1.6 to 4.3 as of year 2000.

- Although "long range planning" has a wholesome ring about it, I question investing large amounts of effort and money attempting to forecast such trends. To deal effectively and prepare for the long range future (20 years or more) WWU should continue to encourage flexibility in its faculty and programs and retain as competent an administration as possible. Given these and some shorter range planning, the long range future will take care of itself.

- In future planning, please provide faculty with amenities or privileges not provided with salary; begin by providing free faculty parking on campus.

- I believe that the single, most pressing planning need is to develop methods to limit enrollment to about 10,000 students. This campus is a jewel, and every effort should be made to keep it reasonable in size while improving the quality of programs offered within the enrollment ceiling. Quantity is not the same as quality in higher education.

- I have tried to convey several convictions through my responses: (1) massive social change is agonizingly slow dispite the flood of journalistic garbage that inundates us repeatedly, eg. Greening of America. (2) Higher education will die if it limits itself to a narrow age range. (3) Four year schools will be replaced by the two-year if (a) they do not become responsive to community needs as perceived by the community, and (b) if they lose the campus focus and academic orientation which distinguish them from community colleges.

- Two things:
  One, I am troubled by the vocabulary of this questionnaire and the implications of that vocabulary upon our university. It seems to define the university as a place for career training, rather than as an educational institution (not the same thing); to wonder about the "value" of the humanities; and to suggest that "value" is determined by utilitarian and pragmatic cues. If, as an institution, we cannot assert the value of the humanities, arts, and the study of the sciences as enriching to a mature personality we are indeed in serious trouble. It is a recurring confusion in American life: "training" (specific skills for specific tasks) and "education" (the cultivation of the powers of the mind and the acquisition of access to one's cultural heritage). It is too bad we can't at least be clear about the differences in our own minds, so that we will not continue to mislead the public.
  Two, as an"expert in human inquiry" (your words) I know perfectly well that four hundred times zero is zero. My uninformed impressions have no validity for planning (what kind of opinion was it that led a state agency to assume that Western would have an enrollment of 15,000 students by 1975?). There is no validity or weight to my predictions and none to those predictions of my colleagues--though bitter experience tells me that somehow they become engraved in stone if there are enough of them. We are acting out an intellectually phony exercise. Surely rational predictions are based upon information on demographic trends, complex analyses of income and income distribution within the state, projections generated by groups who actually control long-range trends (inasmuch as they can be controlled). I know my predictions are valueless. Who could have predicted the sixties? in the fifties? or OPEC? or Boeing's great rejuvenation?

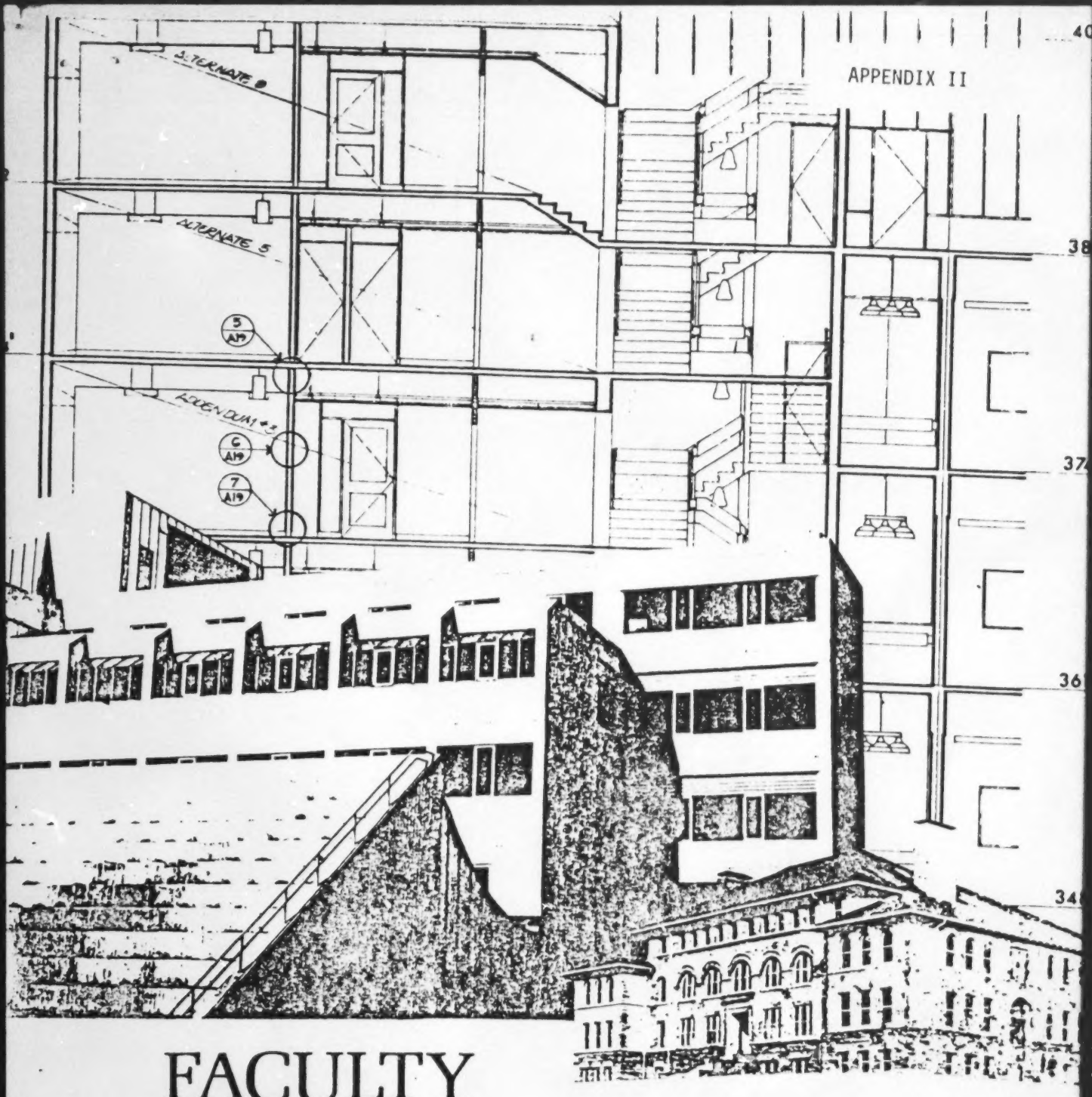
I realize you understand the difficulty of long-range planning confronted with the multitude of variables in our complex society; I am merely registering my sense of outrage at the silliness of the questionnaire. I fully understand that you would not dream of "planning" without the best, hard information you can get from banks, state agencies, census figures, etc.

- I'll come back in my wheelchair in 2000 and see how right I was.

- This took about 30 minutes to complete. It may be useful; however, multiple choices are often frustrating in that generalities often raise more questions than answers. I see the year 2000 as brightly studded with pockets of humanistic progress and technical productivity. Values change slowly unless there is an irresistible force developing the energies of change. The general attitude developed and cultivated by the educational community can produce optimistic or pessimistic activity in the population. We serve continually as the "starter for the cultural yeast of humanity." And, we must carefully, as is possible, recommend the ingredients for the mix.

- It is difficult to know what kinds of useful conclusions are to be derived from the above data. I have tried to convey several convictions through my responses: (1) massive social change is agonizingly slow despite the flood of journalistic garbage that innundates us repeatedly, e.g. Greening of America. (2) Higher education will die if it limits itself to a narrow age range. (3) Four year schools will be replaced by the two-year if (a) they do not become responsive to community needs as perceived by the community, and (b) if they lose the campus focus and academic orientation which distinguishes them from community schools.

- Congratulations for making an effort to do some research that should have been an on-going process since the founding of the school. Many items are not clear because the parameters are not well established and too much is left to interpretation. Further, is the respondent to assume that the U.S. will not become embroiled in any "police action" conflicts or major wars during the next 20 years? What will the climate be like--steady, better, or worse? These two questions illustrate the type of benchmarks that must be established for the respondent before he/she may react with any possible objectivity.
I don't have much confidence in the quality of data that you are going to receive from the faculty. I have evern less confidence in that which you must coerce from them through follow-up reminders. The questionnaire deserves a lot of thought and many, if not most, are going to "cruise" through, giving little introspective consideration to their answers. You need time, money, a thorough and faultless instrument and a cooperative faculty. Your respondents must justify their responses with perspicaceous elaboration. When this massive amount of data has been picked to the bone you will then have the skeletal basis for purposeful long-range planning--not before.



FACULTY QUESTIONAIRE

FOR FUTURE PLANNING

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WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

FACULTY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FUTURE PLANNING

INTRODUCTION

Dear Colleague,

Western Washington University enjoys the benefits of a nationally recognized planning process. This planning process is, however, not yet complete. True long-range planning requires a serious study of possible futures twenty to twenty-five years ahead. This survey is the first step in the Long Range Planning Committee's effort to make rational decisions concerning the make-up of our University in the year 2000. All future planning is an exercise in crystal ball gazing. Although no one can be absolutely certain about specific events, most of us have opinions about the direction of some trends. This questionnaire is designed to provide the Committee with the opinions of experts in all areas of human inquiry. And it will, if you and your faculty colleagues will help by completing the questionnaire. Each response is important because of the wide range of backgrounds and talents represented by our faculty.

Our purpose is to establish a highly probable background of economic, social, educational and academic trends which will be used as a foundation for the development of realistic scenarios depicting alternative futures for the University. This survey applies well-known techniques in the area of socio-political forecasting and has been carefully reviewed in an attempt to minimize the time required for you to record your opinions. We are requesting a minimum amount of biographical information in order to analyze the data, but your responses will be anonymous. I hope you will find this questionnaire interesting. We intend to publicize the results of the survey during Winter Quarter.

Thank you for your participation.

James A. Burns

James A. Burns
Office of Institutional Research

Before you begin, please answer the following biographical questions:

1. How many years have you been teaching (at all levels)?_____
2. How many years have you been affiliated with Western?_____
3. What is your academic department (or academic background, if not attached to a department)?_____
4. What is your age, in years?_____

Instructions for Section 1

This section is designed to record your opinions about broad trends in several areas. We are concerned about the direction and impact of these trends between now and the year 2000. Please record your best judgments concerning the direction and rate of change, as well as the impact upon society for each of the trends. The scale used for direction and rate of change is:

0 = no opinion
1 = rapid decrease
2 = gradual decrease
3 = no change
4 = gradual increase
5 = rapid increase

These responses should be noted in the Change column.

Impact on society will be gauged according to the following scale:

0 = no opinion
1 = no impact
2 = very limited impact
3 = limited impact
4 = affects many people
5 = some effect on all people

Your choices from this scale should be recorded in the Impact column.

Example:	Change	Impact
Use of Public Transportation	2	3

In the above example, the respondent has indicated the use of public transportation will gradually decrease in the next 22 years, and this trend will have a limited impact on society.

SECTION 1. A. ECONOMIC TRENDS

For each of the following economic trends indicate your judgment of the direction and rate of change in the Change column, and your judgment of the impact this change will have on society in the Impact column. Please use the scales provided on Page 2. A blank has been provided at the end of the section for any trend you may wish to add.

		Change	Impact
1.	Inflation Rate (averaged 6½% over the past 10 years).	3.6	4.5
2.	Use of communications and computer technology to provide interactive access to information in remote locations, e.g. home, office, library.	4.3	3.9
3.	Rate of technological change.	4.1	4.3
4.	Effective control of chemical pollutants, solid wastes, radiation and other toxic substances present in U.S. food, land, water or air.	3.5	4.2
5.	Development of non-fossil energy sources.	4.0	4.2
6.	U. S. reliance on foreign nations for energy and natural resources.	3.1	4.2
7.	Use of space colonies for both manufacturing and the transmission of solar energy to earth.	3.4	2.5
8.	International cooperation among nations for economic growth, environmental protection and conservation of resources.	3.5	3.8
9.	Percentage of women entering the work force.	4.0	3.9
10.	Internal combustion automobiles as the primary mode of personal transportation.	2.4	3.9
11.	Willingness of taxpayers to support government spending, at both state and federal levels.	2.3	4.0
12.	Numbers of people moving to Washington State, i.e. in-migration.	4.1	4.2
13.	Strength of the Washington State economy.	3.7	4.1
14.	(Other)_____		
	_____		

SECTION 1. B. SOCIAL TRENDS

For each of the following social trends indica e your judgment of the direction and rate of change in the Change column, and your judgment of the impact this change will have on society in the Impact column. Please use the scales provided on Page 2. A blank has been provided at the end of the section for any trend you may wish to add.

	Change	Impact
1. Personal participation in athletics to maintain physical fitness.	3.6	3.2
2. Amount of time Americans spend viewing commercial television.	3.0	3.3
3. U.S. Birth Rate (It is currently at or slightly below replacement level.)	3.0	3.8
4. Replacement of "traditional" nuclear families by single parent households, "living together" and other lifestyles.	3.4	3.4
5. Affirmative action to compensate for past discrimination against women.	3.2	3.4
6. Affirmative action to compensate for past discrimination against ethnic minorities.	3.1	3.4
7. Isolation of senior citizens from the nuclear family and community life.	2.9	3.6
8. Racial discrimination against ethnic minorities, e.g. Black, Hispanic, American Indian, Asian.	2.5	3.7
9. Time people spend growing, making and repairing what they need rather than purchasing goods and services in the marketplace.	3.3	3.3
10. Use of the printed page to communicate information.	2.8	3.4
11. (Other)_____		
_____		

SECTION 1. C. EDUCATIONAL TRENDS

For each of the following educational trends indicate your judgment of the direction and rate of change in the Change column, and your judgment of the impact this change will have on society in the Impact column. Please use the scales provided on Page 2. A blank has been provided at the end of the section for any trend you may wish to add.

		Change	Impact
1.	Federal regulation of academic research, e. g. genetics.	3.6	3.2
2.	Students taking five or more years to complete the B.A. degree.	3.5	3.1
3.	Emphasis on career education.	3.8	3.4
4.	Public feelings about the value of a college education.	2.9	3.3
5.	Move to provide the opportunity for a college education to any student, i.e. open enrollment.	3.0	3.1
6.	Federal involvement in institutional activities, e.g. Affirmative Action Reports, Certification of Veterans' Enrollment, HEGIS Surveys, NSF Surveys.	3.6	3.5
7.	Percentage of Americans functionally literate in reading and writing the English language.	3.1	3.4
8.	Tenure as a standard policy in U.S. higher education.	2.5	2.8
9.	Collective bargaining for academic professionals.	3.8	3.1
10.	Grade inflation.	2.9	3.1
11.	Return to a General Education Curriculum	3.2	3.0
12.	Number of full-time traditional students (ages 17-25) enrolled in colleges and universities.	2.6	3.3
13.	Number of non-traditional students (over 25) enrolled in academic programs.	3.9	3.4
14.	Frequency of mid-career job changes among working adults.	3.9	3.6
15.	Competition among postsecondary institutions and other social and cultural institutions for students.	3.9	3.4
16.	Development of interdisciplinary programs.	3.5	3.1
17.	Competency based educational standards.	3.5	3.4
18.	Overeducation and underemployment of skills on the job.	3.4	3.4
19.	Participation in person-centered growth groups to learn techniques for self-actualization and coping with stress.	3.3	3.1
20.	Role of the courts in deciding educational policy issues.	3.5	3.5

	Change	Impact
21. Academic quality of Washington State H. S. graduates.	3.1	3.3
22. Use of behavior modification and drugs to enhance learning and modify human behavior.	3.0	3.0
23. Opportunities for students to influence organizational decisions which affect academic governance.	3.0	2.8
24. Competition among postsecondary institutions and other social and cultural institutions for financial resources.	4.1	3.7
25. (Other)_____		
_____	_____	_____

Instructions for Section I. D.

This section is designed to collect information about trends in specific academic areas. The departments listed under each general area have been so categorized for purposes of analysis only. We are only requesting that you complete the section for your personal area of expertise, but you are certainly free to record opinions in other areas if you wish. In our analysis we will group responses in this section on the basis of the departmental affiliation you noted at the beginning of the questionnaire.

In this section the Impact column will be limited to your perception of the impact of the trend at Western.

SECTION I. D. TRENDS IN ACADEMIC AREAS

Using the scales provided on Page 2, indicate your judgment of the direction and rate of change of the following Academic trends in the Change column, and your judgment of the impact each change will have on Western in the WWU Impact column. You are requested to complete the section for your area of specialization.

	Change	WWU Impact
HUMANITIES (Home Economics, English, Foreign Language, Speech, Philosophy, Liberal Studies, Journalism)		
1. Growth of Departmental Research	3.2	2.8
2. Changes in instructional techniques	3.3	2.8
3. Size of Program relative to total University	3.0	3.1
4. Value as a career field	3.2	3.2

	Change	WWU Impact
SOCIAL SCIENCES (Anthropology, History, Geography, Political Science, Sociology, Ethnic Studies, Psychology)		
5. Growth of Departmental Research	3.3	2.8
6. Changes in instructional techniques	3.2	2.8
7. Size of Program relative to total University	3.0	2.8
8. Value as a career field	3.2	3.0
FINE ARTS (Art, Music, Theater/Dance)		
9. Growth of Departmental Research	3.1	2.7
10. Changes in instructional techniques	3.3	2.7
11. Size of Program relative to total University	3.3	3.0
12. Value as a career field	3.2	3.0
EDUCATION (Physical Education, Library Science, Technology, Education)		
13. Growth of Departmental Research	3.3	2.8
14. Changes in instructional techniques	3.5	3.0
15. Size of Program relative to total University	2.8	2.8
16. Value as a career field	3.3	3.0
BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS (Accounting, Business Administration, Economics, Office Administration)		
17. Growth of Departmental Research	3.7	3.0
18. Changes in instructional techniques	3.4	3.0
19. Size of Program relative to total University	4.0	3.6
20. Value as a career field	3.8	3.6
PHYSICAL AND BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES (Biology, Math, Chemistry, Geology, Physics, Astronomy)		
21. Growth of Departmental Research	3.3	3.1
22. Changes in instructional techniques	3.3	2.9
23. Size of Program relative to total University	3.2	3.1
24. Value as a career field	3.6	3.2

SECTION 2 Instructions

Section 1 was an analysis of broad trends. This section is designed to collect more specific information about Western and the Bellingham area. The method used in this section is to present a scaled continuum between two polar positions. You are asked to note both where you think Western fits now and where it should be by the year 2000. Please keep in mind that this is an opinion survey and your responses should reflect an ideal - not necessarily a political possibility.

The continuum between each pair of contrasting positions is divided into five sections. You respond by writing the number of the section that fits your viewpoint in the appropriate column, either Now or 2000.

Example:

Usefulness of the Bachelors Degree	Now	2000
None 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely Valuable	3.5	3

For example, this reply indicates the respondent feels that the degree is moderately useful now, but will have declined in usefulness by the turn of the century.

Factual information has been preprinted in the proper place on the questionnaire. Responses will be accepted to one decimal place. A blank has been provided should you wish to include another Trend statement.

		Now	2000
1.	Enrollment 8000 9000 10000 12000 15000 1 2 3 4 5	2.8	3.5
2.	Governance Collegium 1 2 3 4 5 Collective Bargaining	1.9	3.2
3.	Identity Local 1 2 3 4 5 National	2.2	3.2
4.	Orientation Teaching 1 2 3 4 5 Research	2.4	2.8
5.	Housing Residential 1 2 3 4 5 Commuter	2.6	2.9

		Now	2000
6.	Organization Fewer Colleges 1 2 3 4 5 More Colleges	3	3.3
7.	Ambience Friendly 1 2 3 4 5 Impersonal	2.7	2.7
8.	Service Population 18-25 yr. old H.S. Graduates 1 2 3 4 5 All Citizens of Washington State	2.1	3.3
9.	Bellingham Population 30,000 (1) 40,000 (2) 50,000 (3) 60,000 (4) 70,000 (5)	2	3.6
10.	University's Relationship to Bellingham Service to Community 1 2 3 4 5 Simply location of Institution	3.3	2.9
11.	Bellingham Ambience Small Town 1 2 3 4 5 Urban City	2.2	3.1
12.	Whatcom County Population 90,000 1 2 3 4 5 130,000	1.4	3.3
13.	Western Whatcom County Ambiance Undeveloped 1 2 3 4 5 Developed	2.2	3.2
14.	(Other) _____ 1 2 3 4 5	___	___

SECTION 3

Thank you for taking the time to complete a rather long questionnaire. Please use the space below for any comments you may wish to make about this survey or our attempts to develop a basis for long range planning at Western.

Please return the completed survey to the Office of Institutional Research, OM 360. Extra copies of the survey are available if you would like to keep a copy for your files.